

APPENDIX – C
Citizen Comments

**Public Comments at "Needs" Public Hearing
Monday, January 18, 2011 at 7:00 PM
Durham City Council
(Excerpts from Approved Minutes)**

SUBJECT: FY 2011-2012 "NEEDS" PUBLIC HEARING

Community Development Director Mike Barros made comments on the five-year plan outlining the two priorities to include special needs housing for people who cannot afford housing on their own without some type of subsidy or assistance, and neighborhood revitalization. He stated nothing will be approved until Council votes on the Action Plan which occurs later in the year.

Wilmur Conyers, from the Community Development Office, explained the purpose of this public hearing tonight would be to receive comments from citizens on the needs in Durham neighborhoods and low and moderate income individuals as it relates to the use and receipt of Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership funds and Emergency Shelter Grant funds. She discussed the notification process and stated as a HUD requirement, they are required to hold at least two public meetings--one being held in the early stages of development of the Annual Action Plan and the second meeting will be held in late April or early May 2011. She reported the Action Plan must be submitted to HUD by May 15, 2011. In addition, they are required to publish a draft of the Annual Action Plan for at least 30 days prior to its submission.

Ms. Conyers reported because the City has not been notified of its 2011-2012 entitlement allocations--staff will be using the current year allocations for planning purposes. For fiscal year 2010-2011, the City received \$2,104,922 in CDBG funds, \$1,361,212 in HOME funds, and \$85,140 in Emergency Shelter Grant funds. She reported an application workshop was held on December 14, 2010 for federal funds and applications are due January 27, 2011. She noted unlike in previous years and because of the focus and vision for the Southside community, the City has not proposed funding for public service activities for the upcoming fiscal year. She stated all comments tonight will be incorporated into the Annual Action Plan and any comments received during the development of the Annual Action Plan will be incorporated as well.

Mayor Bell opened the public hearing.

Council Member Brown expressed concern that there was no staff report and that none of the issues addressed by staff were made public in terms of how the money would be allocated.

Mike Barros, Director of Community Development, gave a breakdown on the amount allocated for applications last year and this application period. He explained since this was a needs public hearing--Council did not receive a briefing on this item. He stated people were aware that social service needs were not being included in what staff is recommending, however, staff is not making a recommendation at this point.

Council Member Catotti said when people are told that they are no longer eligible to apply--they feel a decision has been made. Since Council has never discussed this issue, she asked who decided no services. She mentioned last May, Council discussed the Southside redirection of funds and that was conditional based on a report from the administration which has not been provided to-date.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden requested a breakdown on the number of non-profits who receive CDBG funding as well as receive funding through other pockets of money in the City.

Mike Barros, Director of Community Development, explained the process for allocating funds.

For clarification, Mike Barros noted they informed citizens that they did not allocate money for the applications in the public service area. He noted the department made the decision if someone comes in with social service needs in the Southside area those would be considered. He mentioned the City can allocate up to 15 percent in CDGB funding for public service needs and staff was asked to not request application for service needs.

Larry Jarvis, of Community Development, gave a breakdown of \$986,000 in funding that staff would make available through a competitive process which comprised of CDBG - \$150,000; HOME CHDO - \$205,000; HOME - \$300,000; General Funds - \$251,969; ESG - \$80,000.

Mr. Jarvis explained the difference in funding that was made available last year and what is being recommended this year for public service. Last year \$310,000 in CDGB funds went towards public service and the recommendation this year would be to not allocate funds for public services. He noted the other big difference was housing development activities. Last year, non -profits received between \$400,000 - \$425,000 to undertake housing development activities in Southwest Central Durham, or in North East Central Durham. He stated there is substantial inventory of properties that non-profits have acquired just sitting there, completed houses have not sold as well as stalled projects due to the down turn in the housing market and other factors.

Council Member Ali requested a chart on the communities affected by public service and the housing development plan.

City Manager Bonfield made comments on the evaluation process and noted Council

could provide direction to staff this evening after the public hearing. Also, he made comments about other methods to address high priority community needs through the budget process.

Larry Jarvis gave a breakdown of sub-recipients who were awarded social services funding that were told they were not eligible this year: Urban Ministries - \$50,000; Durham Interfaith Hospitality Network - \$40,000; Asbury Temple UNC - \$35,000; John Avery Boys and Girls Club - \$30,000; Durham Housing Authority - \$50,000; Milestone's Culinary Institute - \$35,000 - Teen Court and Restitution Center - \$40,000 and Durham Affordable Housing Coalition - \$30,000.

City Manager Bonfield stated there is nothing to prevent any agency from submitting an application.

Chuck Clifton highlighted points from the *What's at Stake* presentation dated September 2010. He asked the Council to concentrate on the following needs for Durham: 1) open community discussion regarding this new and dangerous direction planned for CDBG and HOME funds; 2) the need to acknowledge how CDBG/HOME funds are allocated today and the abrupt shut down of these funds that is being planned; 3) the need to work together to find a middle ground that doesn't compromise support for our at-risk and in-need communities while making progress in the re-development of other areas in the City; and 4) a plan on how to replace the public service funding. He urged all agencies to apply now for funding.

Catherine Pleil, representing Durham Interfaith Hospitality, shared information relating to the services they provide in the community. She urged Council to continue to partner with Interfaith Hospitality to invest in case management which is critical to getting jobs for parents, families into housing and stopping the cycle of homelessness from repeating itself.

Rev. Mark Anthony Middleton, representing Durham Interfaith Hospitality Network, commented on the homeless population that they serve. He urged Council to reject any recommendation that would bar organizations from applying for CDBG funding.

Sarah Jobs, representing Rutba House/INH, spoke in support of funding for social service agencies which is a vital part of her life and the people that she serves as a minister.

Selina Mack, representing the Durham Community Land Trustees, expressed her concern with the proposed City's shift--withdrawal of City investment in Durham's inner city neighborhoods--Southwest Central Durham and North East Central Durham. She commented on the investment DCLT has made for people and properties in Southwest Central Durham for 20 years. She noted more investment is needed in Southwest Central Durham and would not occur without city investment. She urged Council to

protect their investment and their property values. She also expressed a concern with the loss of public services and with losing counseling services provided by the Durham Affordable Housing Coalition. She urged Council to make an investment in SWCD, NECD while initiating the revitalization of the Southside neighborhood.

Lauren Rodgers, representing the Durham Community Land Trustees, spoke in support of funding for DCLT. She urged Council to focus on meeting the basic needs of Durham's poorest citizens and to not forget the needs of the people from the three target neighborhoods, including Burch Avenue Neighborhood.

Ryan Fehrman, representing Genesis Home, spoke in support of affordable housing and permanent supportive housing to rebuild lives so that they can move from homelessness to housing. He stated his concern is not the project itself, but how we propose to pay for it. He noted redirecting CDBG service funds to Rolling Hills at a time of unprecedented need would cut a hole in Durham's safety net of supportive services and push residents closer to poverty and desperation. He expressed concern that staff has already determined that these projects are no longer eligible for CDBG funding despite the need for these services. He noted everyone is still waiting on an alternative funding plan for those services.

Todd Maberry, representing the Citizens Advisory Committee, stated in October 2010, a letter was sent to Council stating while they support the City's initiatives in Rolling Hills and Southside, they don't think it should come at the expense of other revitalization efforts in West Central Durham, North East Central Durham and other similar neighborhoods. He asked that a plan be put in place to continue the revitalization efforts in the stated neighborhoods.

Stephen Hopkins spoke in support of funding for the Campaign for Decent Housing. He urged Council to continue to fund the minor home repair program, lead program, and services for special needs residents and neighborhood revitalization for the three target areas--North East Central Durham, Southwest Central Durham and Southside/Rolling Hills. He asked Council to support funding the rental inspection program, the Youth Build, and housing counselors at Durham Affordable Housing Coalition. He urged Council to grant the Campaign and its supporters a Coffee with Council to provide a housing strategy.

Sandy Demeree, representing the West End Neighborhood Association and Quality of Life Project, thanked Council for supporting their needs in the past and asked them to continue supporting the needs of affordable housing and counseling services for the West End community.

Michael Kelly stated he is a perfect example of what is being discussed tonight and proof that the Continuum of CAARE is in place and working well. He shared his experience from homelessness to owning a Habitat home on Carroll Street.

Terry Allebaugh, representing Housing for New Hope, thanked Council for

their commitment to fund permanent supportive housing and shared information about 24 people who went from being homeless to their apartment. He encouraged Council to keep public services in the CDBG fund which would mean making available to the community up to \$345,000--15 percent of the \$2.3 million allocated.

Philip Azar, representing Habitat for Humanity, asked Council to support the repairs program for aging housing stock, the proposed rental housing inspections program and to meet with the Campaign for Decent Housing during a Coffee with Council session.

Lorisa Seibel, representing Durham Affordable Housing Coalition, urged Council to allow groups to apply for funding, to help the same number of people with housing and services, to allow applications for \$345,000 for basic services that help neighbors in need because without City funds--services would be cut during a recession when more people need help with housing, food and other essentials. She discussed the services provided to individuals by the Durham Affordable Housing Coalition. She urged Council to allow them to apply for funding for their housing counseling program to help Durham residents with the dream of owning their home and to qualify for rental housing.

Matt Gates urged Council to recommit to fighting poverty and to remember the urgency to address this issue.

Lanier Blum, representing People Alliance, read a statement from Evan Covington Chavez conveying that success of neighborhoods [West End, Lyon Park, Southside and Walltown] requires the continued collaborative resources of community groups, non-profit service organizations and housing development partners. She referenced if the City does not continue to provide financial resources our success to-date may be in jeopardy and there is a need for a Comprehensive Funding Plan that addresses current needs as well as long term housing and services. As a member of People's Alliance, Lanier Blum asked Council to provide funds for services in all three neighborhoods and the report she delivered this past summer shows how that could be done.

Dabney Hopkins, representing People's Alliance, stated that Durham needs clear, accurate, transparent and up-to-date information about City plans and perceptions of community needs. She expressed concern that there is no progress report on the information requested May 3, 2010, and that the City would cut services and housing investments for the poor at a time when the number of poor and poorly housed and homeless people are growing. She noted there's a need for more housing counseling, rental homes and urged Council to focus on improving housing in all three target neighborhoods and improving services for the poor.

Patrice Nelson, representing the Urban Ministries of Durham, spoke about the following needs that are needed in Durham to include services, collaboration, clarity and justice.

Susan Olive, representing Urban Ministries of Durham, commented on the budgetary needs of the homeless, hungry and poor. She shared information regarding what their budget of \$2.9 million provides in terms of meals, shelter, food, clothing counseling and rehabilitative services.

Jess Brandes, representing CASA, highlighted there is a need for special needs housing and services for persons who are homeless, have disabilities and are homeless veterans.

Ruebe Holmes, a resident at Urban Ministries of Durham and a student at Duke University, stated she was present on behalf of the homeless people of Durham and there are basic needs to include food, clothing and shelter for a child to grow and develop.

Rukiya Huggins stated she has been homeless for four months, but will be moving into affordable housing in the next couple of days. She asked that there be affordable housing for the homeless.

Victoria Peterson raised a concern with the number of people living in Durham in poverty, asked that CDBG funds be used to research why Durham residents are not receiving employment, and urged the City to adopt a policy that would allow any new employment to go first to persons who live in Durham.

Mayor Bell closed the public hearing.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden requested information on how many agencies, including City departments, provide housing counseling.

Council Member Brown commented that there are more needs than revenue and noted based on the comments heard this evening, Council should continue to support all agencies. He stated he could not image Durham being a caring community turning their backs on those who work daily in the non-profit arena for those who need services. He thanked everyone for coming and sharing their heartfelt comments.

Council Member Catotti thanked everyone for sharing their remarks and asked the City Manager to designate time during the retreat to discuss this matter.

City Manager Bonfield noted this issue could be discussed during the second day of the retreat; however, staff will review the schedule. Mr. Bonfield explained why the housing report was not ready. He noted until staff receives information regarding the tax credit application/delayed funding commitments and HUD funding structures any information provided would be subject to change.

Mayor Bell thanked everyone for coming and expressing their needs for the Durham community. He stated he will take very seriously what has been said tonight and weigh it against what he will hear from the administration, the housing side and other persons

who come before Council during budget deliberations.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden seconded by Council Member Brown to receive public comments on FY 2011-2012 "Needs" was approved at 9:19 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden and Council Members Ali, Brown, Catotti and Woodard. Noes: None. Excused Absence: Council Member Clement.

A citizen in the audience asked if they could still apply for funding.

Mayor Bell stated he did not have a problem with the citizen applying and did not want anybody to walk out of the room thinking that they could not apply.